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5. (Amended) A security unit according to Claim 4 in which the means to detect the sealing of the removable package includes a means to detect current flow through the heat seal unit.

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6. (Amended) A security unit according to claim 1 further comprising a lock (14) having a delay such that the access to the interior of the housing, and in particular to the removable package (7), is prevented for a predetermined period after an attempt is made to open the case.

1/13
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8. (Amended) A security unit according to claim 1 further comprising a sensor associated with the sealing mechanism to verify that there are no items in the position where the removable package is to be sealed.

1/13
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9. (Amended) A security unit according to claim 1 further comprising an identification and/or validation means (5) between the inlet of the housing and the removable package (7) for identifying and/or validating items which are introduced to the removable package (7).

1/13
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12. (Amended) A security unit according to claim 1 in which a sensor (43) detects the presence and/or the correct fitting of a removable package (7), and prevents the use of the unit unless a removable package (7) is present and/or fitted correctly.

1/13
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13. (Amended) A gas feed conveying system for use in a secure unit the gas feed conveying system comprising a channel (8) through which items are to be conveyed and a pair of gas inlets provided on opposed sides of the channel (8) inclined at an angle to that in which the items are to be conveyed, and through which gas from outside the channel (8) is jetted to produce a gas flow through the channel (8) which entrains an item to convey this through the channel.

1/13
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15. (Amended) A gas feed conveying system according to Claim 13 in which the channel (8) has a generally oval cross-sectional channel in a plane generally normal to that along which the items are conveyed.

16. (Amended) A gas feed conveying system according to Claim 13 in which the inlets are formed at an angle of about 45° to the direction in which items are conveyed through the channel (8).

17. (Amended) A gas feed conveying system according to Claim 13 in which the inlets are provided at the entrance of the channel (8), and are arranged such that the gas flows from the inlets converge towards the longitudinal central plane of the channel (8).

18. (Amended) A gas feed conveying system according to Claim 13 in which the inlets are formed by providing a hole though a dimple formed in the surface of the channel.

19. (Amended) A gas feed conveying system according to Claim 13 in which the inlets comprise elongate slots extending substantially across the width of the channel.

20. (Amended) A gas feed conveying system according to Claim 13 in which the channel is formed of sheet material, such as metal, and in which the inlets are formed in the flat sheet which is then bent to form the channel.

21. (Amended) A gas feed conveying system according to Claim 13 in which the channel is formed from a plastics material.

22. (Amended) A gas feed system according to Claim 13 in which sensors are provided to detect the movement of items through the channel, and control means are provided to control the flow of gas through the inlets dependent upon the detection of movement of items through the channel.

23. (Amended) A secure unit according to Claim 1 further comprising gas feed conveying system including a channel through which items are to be conveyed and a pair of gas inlets provided on opposite sides of the channel inclined at an angle to that in which the items are to be conveyed, and through which gas from outside the channel is jetted to produce a gas flow

64
through the channel which entrains an item to convey this through the channel.

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24. (Amended) A package for use in the secure unit according to Claim 1 the package comprising a plastics container having an inlet opening for receiving items to be collected, a neck portion extending from the inlet opening, and a number of gas outlets remote from the inlet opening through which gas introduced into the inlet is vented.

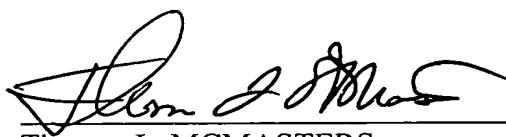
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26. (Amended) A package according to Claim 24, including fluid outlet holes provided in the wall of the package towards the upper part of the package remote from the inlet to the package.

REMARKS

The present Preliminary Amendment is being filed concurrently with the National Stage application identified above. Claims 1-26 are currently pending in this application. By this Preliminary Amendment, claims 1-3, 7, 10, 11, 14 and 25 remain unchanged, and claims 4-6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15-23, 24 and 26 are amended.

Applicant respectfully requests that the present amendment be entered before the calculation of filing fees. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional filing fees required to Deposit Account No. 06-1910.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas L. MCMASTERS
Registration No. 45,593
FREDRIKSON & BYRON, P.A.
110 International Centre
900 Second Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55402-3397
(612) 752-2640

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